

ESTRILDA RUFOPICTA. *Estr. supernè fusca, fronte, facie, gula, et pectore cum tectricibus caudæ vinaceis; hoc colore corpore reliquo inferiore, et caudæ supernè tinctis; alarum tectricibus inferioribus flavido-albis; guttis minutissimis perpaucais albis apud pectus; rostro rubro, culmine nigro.*

Long. tot. $3\frac{3}{4}$ poll.; rostri, $\frac{5}{4}$; alæ, $1\frac{7}{8}$; caudæ, $1\frac{5}{8}$; tarsi, $\frac{1}{2}$.

Hab. Cape Coast.

IXOS INORNATUS. *Ix. fuscus, capitis et caudæ colore intensiore; corpore subtùs sordidè albescenti-fusco.*

Long. tot. 8 poll.; rostri, $\frac{5}{4}$; alæ, $3\frac{3}{4}$; caudæ, $3\frac{1}{2}$; tarsi, $\frac{3}{4}$.

Hab. Cape Coast.

MISCELLANEOUS.

DESTRUCTION OF TREES BY SCOLYTUS.

M. ROBERT has written to the French Academy of Sciences respecting some observations which he had made on trees attacked by *Scolyti*, and on several elms in particular of the grand avenue of the Champs Elysées. "These trees," says he, "appear to be in a good state of vegetation; their leaves fall neither earlier nor quicker than those of the neighbouring trees which have been less damaged by the insects; and nevertheless, if the bark of the trunk be examined carefully, it will be seen that at about a metre from the soil a circular band of this bark, from two to three metres in breadth, is not only completely killed in consequence of the ravages of the *Scolytus*, but that the liber is also destroyed and converted into humus, and perhaps even the liburnum has begun to be altered."—*Comptes Rendus*, No. 20, p. 1146.

DEMODEX FOLLICULORUM.

The following interesting notice is an abstract of a communication read by Mr. Tulk before the Microscopical Society, December 20, 1843:—

During the present month, Mr. Topping, the ingenious preparer of microscopic objects, showed me some remarkable parasites found by him in examining the contents of the pustules in a "mangy" dog, and which I at once recognised as belonging to the genus *Demodex* (Owen), which was first discovered, described and figured by Dr. Simon of Berlin as inhabiting the sebaceous sacs and hair follicles of the human skin. It would be difficult to determine whether the present parasite existed in a similar situation, as the animal was such a perfect mass of disease; but as the hairs had fallen off in most places, leaving the pustular and scabby surface of the skin exposed, it is not improbable that it had been developed within their follicles. These parasites were very abundant, sometimes as many as thirty to forty in a single drop of pus, among the globules of which their presence is readily indicated by an appearance of pale semitransparent lines, broad at one end and tapering to an obtuse point at the other.

Through the kindness of Mr. Erasmus Wilson I had an opportunity of comparing the above specimens from the dog with those of the human skin, to ascertain whether they constituted a distinct species. The differences however, chiefly of size, which existed between them,—and in this respect the human *Demodices* vary much even among themselves,—did not enable me to arrive at any definite conclusion, though the analogy of other parasites found on different animals would be in favour of their being regarded as separate species. I have preferred the generic name, *Demodex*, expressive of its habitat, given by Prof. Owen, to that of *Acarus* by Dr. Simon, or *Entozoon* by Mr. E. Wilson, as the former implies a relation to a tribe of Arachnida, not warranted certainly from the general form, the multi-articulate condition of the abdomen, and other details of the external anatomy; while that of *Entozoon* is objectionable from the term having been hitherto restricted to a class of parasites infesting the visceral cavities of other animals.

KENTISH BIRDS.

To the Editors of the Annals of Natural History.

Margate, Nov. 1843.

GENTLEMEN,—Some time having elapsed since my last letter, I write to communicate what has fallen in my way during the summer. I have shot several Kentish plovers, and also procured some of the eggs, and the young in the downy state: they were taken on the shingle near Sandown Castle; also three specimens of the Wood Sandpiper, *Totanus Glareola*. These birds only visit us in the spring and autumn; they arrive with the other Sandpipers, but are found more inland by small running streams.

Woodcocks, *Scolopax*, have been very common about the commencement of the present month.

Tringa subarquata, or Pigmy Curlew, rather plentiful on Sandwich Flats about the 18th of October; they only staid for about two days, and were so tame that I brought down eleven in one shot.

The Purple Sandpiper, *Tringa maritima*; only a few of these birds have made their appearance this season, owing to the mildness of the weather, as about this time of the year we generally have them plentifully.

Little Stint, *Tringa minuta*, has been very common all along the coast; but more particularly about Sandwich haven I procured a great many.

A few of the Lesser Tern, *Sterna minuta*, have bred this year on the shingles about the North-shore station; I took a few of their eggs, but the parent bird I allowed to escape, hoping to see them another season in the same locality, for I am much pleased to see these little birds hawking and fishing only a few yards off, and to observe with what dexterity they dart under the water and bring up their prey, and bear it off to their strong-looking young, which have much the appearance of young hawks, moving about among the stones. When they can just begin to fly it is also very amusing to see the

parent birds guard them; if a dog by chance comes near them, they will dart and strike him very hard and drive him off the beach. On the 20th of August, being out shooting on Sandwich haven, my attention was drawn to a large bird sitting on a post or land-mark close to the mouth of the river. I got within about seventy yards, but did not succeed in bringing it down; I kept up a close pursuit the rest of the day, but could not get near enough for a second shot. Next morning, when I returned to the Flats, it was brought to me by one of the boys from the Coast-guard station, who had picked it up: it was a beautiful specimen of the Osprey. It is now in the Margate Museum, as most of the birds named here. On dissecting the bird it was wounded in the neck and had bled to death.

I am, Gentlemen, your obedient Servant,

8 Cecil Street.

S. MUMMERY.

DESCRIPTION OF TWO GREEN-STREAKED WRASSES (*LABRUS LINEATUS*, FLEMING).

To the Editors of the Annals of Natural History.

Rooms of the Devon and Cornwall Natural History Society,
Plymouth, November 7, 1843.

Irides and pupil green, with margins of orange. A very distinct velum suspended from the palate, and just within the mouth. Nape a little depressed. Upper jaw the longer. Operculum angular. Teeth large and sharp; no palatine teeth. Lateral line nearly straight, till near the posterior part of the dorsal fin, where it is deflected, and then passes direct and horizontally to the middle of the tail. Above, the fish is grass-green; below the same, with a mixture of yellowish tint. In the posterior part of the dorsal fin there is a slight disposition to mottles of brown.

Pectoral rays, 14; dorsal, 21 + 10; ventral, 1 + 5; anal, 3 + 8; caudal, 15. Length about 6 inches.

The specimens, of which the foregoing is some description, were captured by the hook and line, among the rocks in-shore at this port, during the past summer. I have known of previous captures in the same season, and am informed by the taxidermist to this Society, that he has taken as many as six in a day when fishing in our sound with the sea-line used for Chads. An excellent preserved specimen is in this Museum. What is the meaning of the epithet "streaked" and "lineatus," as applied to this species?

CAPTURE OF A SHORT SUN-FISH (*ORTHAGORISCUS MOLA*).

In the course of last summer (in August I believe) some fishermen, employed at the distance of half a mile from the town, near Mount Batten, were surprised by the appearance near the surface of a bulky visitor of the above species, and one of them at once put out a "gaff," to which the creature in its playful movements became almost immediately attached, the hook entering at its belly. It measured four feet from above, downwards, fins included; and three

feet from the mouth, backwards. On its upper jaw, just above the mouth, is a horny and semicalcareous irregular plate. On various parts of the body were specimens of the flat white parasite figured in 'Yarrell,' and attached to the gills were several of *Cecrops Latreillii* (Leach)*.

Liver *very* large, and of a gamboge-yellow. Heart half the size of a man's fist. The contents of the stomach could not be judged of.

I bought a specimen of the Fork-beard in Plymouth Market last June. It, with the last-named specimen, is in our collection.

J. C. BELLAMY, Curator.

OBITUARY.

J. C. LOUDON, ESQ., F.L.S.

THERE are few that have lately passed away from amongst us whose loss will be more deeply felt than that of Mr. Loudon, who lately expired at his house in Porchester-terrace, Bayswater. He died of disease of the lungs, which had wasted him to a shadow; but he retained the possession of his clear distinctive faculties to the very last, and walked from the drawing-room to the bed-room, almost without assistance, a short time before he died.

The number and magnitude of his works are almost without parallel, and excite absolute astonishment when we consider the painful disadvantages under which he laboured, having lost one arm, and being deprived to a great extent of the use of the other; but nothing damped his desire of usefulness, or checked his industry. He has been known, while walking up and down his study, to dictate to two amanuenses, and that so clearly and continuously that their pens were never at rest. In all Mr. Loudon's great agricultural, and especially his floricultural works, during the last twelve years of his life, he was assisted by his wife. Mrs. Loudon was favourably known to the literary world, before her marriage, as the author of one or two novels; but she made an easy transit from the ideal to the real, and also accompanied her husband on his visits, when occupied in laying out the landscape gardens of many of the nobility, both in England and his native Scotland. Early and late—nearly day and night—he laboured, and his mind was as independent as industrious. During his last absence from home a number of individuals connected with horticulture in its various and beautiful branches assembled together, determined to show their respect for Mr. Loudon, and their appreciation of his works, by presenting him with

* Mr. Yarrell, to whom I communicated a specimen, writes me thus:—"Your specimen is a female, and, when I first looked at her, she had several young ones crawling about the hollow cavity of the under surface of the thorax; these young ones varied in size, and resembled *Acari* in their general appearance." This specimen, prior to being sent to London, had been soaked two or three days in spirit, and had lain dead at the taxidermist's for several days previously!